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ABSTRACT

Greenfield Community College (GCC) established a participatory management process in 1978 which incorporates: (1) a reorganized governance structure; (2) data collection activities; (3) a mechanism for establishing and implementing institutional goals; and (4) an evaluation component for the entire management process. The new governance structure charges standing faculty committees with submitting policy recommendations to a student-faculty forum, which in turn submits approved recommendations for implementation to an executive administrative staff. Data collection is carried out on an ongoing basis through community college goals inventories, community needs assessments, surveys of non-returning students, and graduate follow-up studies. This information is utilized by faculty, staff, and administrator participants in annual planning retreats conducted to establish institutional goals and objectives in the areas of curriculum, community services, student recruitment, communications, organization, service expansion, and funding. Finally, evaluation of the management process is facilitated by surveys of the retreat participants, who are asked to assess the retreats' outcomes and the data collection activities. Implementation of these management strategies will continue in 1980-81 through a six-stage plan for the evaluation of the college's success in meeting its established goals. (JP)

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THE GREENFIELD PLAN:

an approach to organizational development

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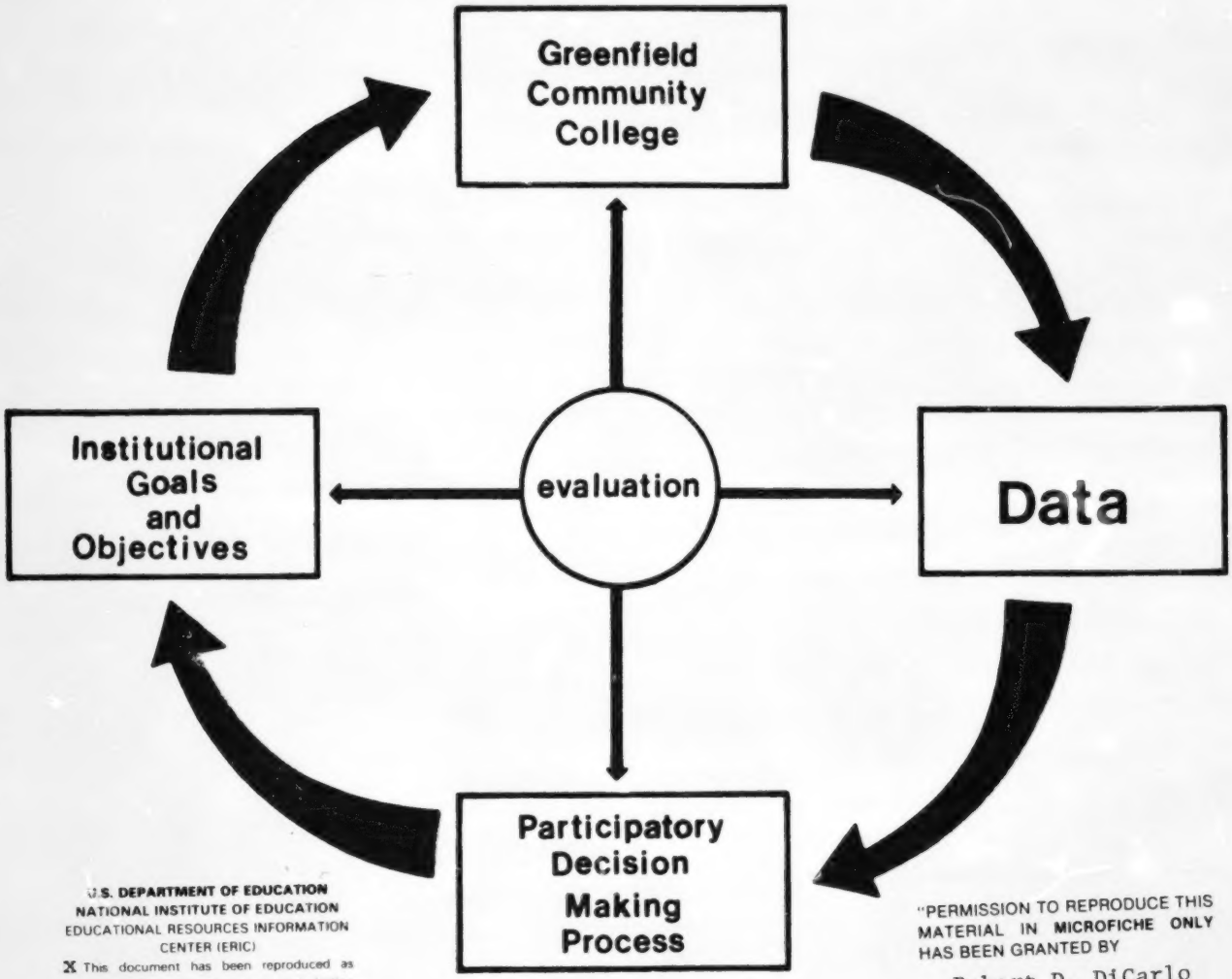

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Nancy L. Goodwin and Robert D. DiCarlo

Greenfield Community College was established in 1962; is located about 100 miles west of Boston and within several miles of Vermont border. GCC is in Franklin County, the most rural area of Massachusetts. In August of 1978, Nancy L. Goodwin assumed the Presidency of GCC.

Over the past seventeen years the composition of students and their needs has shifted from the recent high school graduates who were predominatantly male to a student population that is currently predominantly female and older students. Recent follow-up studies of the graduates indicate that 50% of the students' primary objective in attending GCC was for job preparation; 41% indicated that their anticipated plans at the time of graduation were to continue their education at a higher level.

In order to bring about change needed to meet current and future needs, a process emerged entitled "The Greenfield Plan." The plan is founded on the principle that when information is used as data for decision making through a participatory process, it results in positive changes in the people, programs and organization of the college. At Greenfield Community College the process has brought about a number of institutional changes that will be explained in this paper.

EDUCATION AND CHANGE

Education, like other sectors of our society, must be in constant state of change to keep up with the times. Change, however, is a neutral term that has little or no meaning unless it is related to something. At Greenfield Community College a process has evolved that demonstrates that change can occur in higher education today in a way that can be understood, and accepted by a college constituency. In order to implement the plan, several things had to happen at GCC:

- —The governance structure needed to be reorganized and made functional.
- —Data collection activities needed to be organized and institutionalized.
- —Institutional Goals and Objectives needed to be developed, implemented, and evaluated each academic year.
- —The total process needed to be evaluated.

The following sections of this paper describe how each of these contributed to the implementation of The Greenfield Plan.

Nancy L. Goodwin is President and Robert D. DiCarlo is the Director of Planning and Research at Greenfield Community College.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The initial stages of the process necessitated changes in the governance structure. A draft copy of a new governance structure was developed, distributed, reviewed, and modified. The new structure was accepted by the college constituency by November of 1978.

This new structure called for the establishment of a number of standing and advising committees, a Forum, and an Executive Staff. The new governance structure provides mechanisms for an orderly system that relies upon participatory involvement of the entire college community in order to function. The committees are composed of representatives from the faculty and staff. The Forum is composed of one representative from each committee, along with two student representatives. The committee recommendations are submitted to and reviewed by the Forum. Recommendations approved by the Forum are passed on to the Executive Staff that is composed of the President, Deans, Division Chairs, and several college directors.

During their bi-weekly meetings the Executive Staff reviews the recommendations submitted by the Forum. The Executive Staff, in turn, recommends that the appropriate administrator:

- —Accept the recommendation for immediate implementation.
- —Accept the recommendation for future implementation with contingencies that additional review and study of the issues occur with the people involved

The governance structure allows the college community to have their ideas and concerns heard and acted upon in a manner that is based upon a participatory process. Every person in the college has the opportunity to submit their individual or collective plan or recommendation. By the same token, every person has the opportunity to react to the ideas that are submitted by others. The governance structure establishes a basis for the people and task forces to submit their recommendations for review and consideration for implementation.

CURRENT DATA COLLECTION ACTIVITIES AT GCC

In the Fall of 1978, the role of Director of Planning and Research was established. Through that office institutional data collection, implementation, and evaluation efforts were infused into the college on an institution-wide basis.

In order to implement The Greenfield Plan, an analysis was made to determine what data GCC needed to collect and utilize in order to make decisions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the college. Some of the data sources were:

COMMUNITY COLLEGE GOALS INVENTORY

Student/Faculty/Administration/Staff and Advisory Board perceptions about:

PROCESS GOALS—Internal campus objectives relating to the educational process and campus climate.

OUTCOME GOALS—Substantive goals relating to qualities of graduating students, curriculum emphasis, and community services.

In the Spring of 1979, GCC took part in the pilot administration of the Community College Goals Inventory (CCGI). CCGI, developed by the Educational Testing Service, is an adaption of the Institutional Goals inventory. CCGI reflects the unique goals, concerns, and constituencies of community colleges. As a result of the pilot study in which GCC participated, an operational form of the Community College Goals Inventory was compiled and made generally available in the fall of 1979.

SURVEY OF STUDENT WITHDRAWALS

Reasons why students withdraw from GCC prior to their enrollment

SURVEY OF NON-RETURNING STUDENTS

Reasons why students do not return to GCC after attending for a semester

FOLLOW-UP STUDIES OF THE GRADUATES

Aspirations of students prior to their enrollment and after completing their respective programs, geographic mobility, income level, satisfaction with GCC, and their suggestions about ways to improve the programs and services at GCC

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF FRANKLIN COUNTY

Community perceptions of:

- —Educational Needs
- —Health Care Services
- —The local and county governmental structure
- —Transportation Needs
- —The future of economic development for the county

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

It should be emphasized that data collection, in and of itself, is of limited value unless the information is put to good use. As part of the process of effective utilization of the data, therefore, GCC implemented a process of developing institutional goals and objectives for a one year cycle.

In July, 1979, a group composed of twenty faculty, staff, and administrators attended the first annual Retreat/Planning Session to develop institutional goals and objectives for Greenfield Community College. The Retreat/Planning Session was based on a participatory decision making process with an emphasis on the utilization of information as data for decision making and change at GCC.

Of importance to this process was the utilization of the information derived from administration of the Community College Goals Inventory (CCGI) in the Spring of 1979. It was the first time in the history of GCC that an institutional profile was developed for institutional planning and decision making purposes.

In order to communicate the results from the CCGI in a manner suited to meet CGG's particular needs, the media department developed a chart for "Process Goals" and another for "Outcome Goals." The charts enabled the participants to identify the relationship between the two populations that were surveyed—the students and staff. The breakdown of the group into subgroups, the numbers, and the percentages are as follows:

Subgroups	N	%
Students—Full-time Liberal Arts	51	22
Full-time Career	99	40
Part-time Liberal Arts	30	13
Part-time Career	51	22
Part-time Other	6	3
Total	237	100
Staff—Full-time Faculty	48	48
Part-time Faculty	16	16
Administrators	22	22
GCC Classified Staff	5	5
GCC Advisory Board	8	8
Total	99	100

The information derived from the CCGI enabled the participants of the retreat to have a broad overview of what priorities the institution should address in the form of institutional goals and objectives for the academic year 1979-80.

The other data that was collected and disseminated throughout GCC during the year, along with the CCGI, enabled the participants of the Retreat/Planning Session to identify clearly the college strengths and weaknesses. The CCGI was an important information source that was used in the development of institutional goals and objectives. The CCGI gave the participants an opportunity to look at GCC from an institution-wide perspective rather than a myopic view of their respective program area.

As a result of the Retreat/Planning Session eight in-

stitutional goals were identified in the following areas:

—Curriculum
—Community Services
—Student Recruitment/Advising/Retention
—Communication
—Reorganization
—Expansion of Available Services
—Funding

The eight institutional goal areas were identified as the institutional priorities that needed attention and were implemented during the year.

IMPLEMENTING THE INSTITUTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (1979-80)

During the first two weeks of the fall semester, objectives, time lines, and activities necessary to meet the objectives were negotiated with those who were responsible for their implementation. Task forces were formed to address some of the issues that were identified in the Institutional Goals and Objectives.

During the year progress reports were submitted by the task forces through the governance structure, and the recommendations were acted upon by the Executive Staff and the college administration. End of the year reports were submitted and distributed to the Retreat/Planning Session participants for their use in the development of the 1980-81 Institutional Goals and Objectives.

OUTCOMES

Some of the outcomes of the implementation of the 1979-80 Institutional Goals and Objectives identified by the participants at the Retreat/Planning Session in June of the 1980 were:

—Recognition that GCC is an effective and efficiently managed institution
—The developmment of a clear sense of institutional direction for the constituency to follow.
—Duplication and overlapping activities were identified and corrected through institution-wide planning.
—Identification and resolution of a number of institutional weaknesses and problems.
—Improved communication, both internally and externally.
—A complete curriculum analysis, and many curricula changes.
—A stronger sense of identification with GCC by the college constituency.
—An opportunity for faculty, staff, students, and administration to bring forth their ideas through an organized and workable management system.
—A continual self-analysis of GCC on an institution-wide basis.
—An improvement in the people, programs, and organization at GCC.
—Better utilization of college resources.

Many other benefits are expected to emerge during future years. These benefits are the direct result of the evaluation and implementation of a variety of management strategies during the past several years. An important part of the process is the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Institutional Goals and Objectives for a one year cycle.

EVALUATION OF THE TOTAL PROCESS

As part of the development and implementation of the 1980-81 Institutional Goals and Objectives, an evaluation was conducted. The results of the evaluation indicated that the participants of the Retreat/Planning Session had adequate information sources to utilize in making decisions, that there was adequate opportunity for input, that they were actively involved in the decision making process, and that the college community at large would be receptive and willing to implement the institutional goals and objectives that were developed at the retreat.

The participants were asked what personal outcomes occurred as a result of their participation in the Retreat/Planning Session. Another question asked the participants what institutional outcomes occurred as a result of their participation in the Retreat/Planning Session. It is interesting to note that the responses to both questions were almost identical. The participants felt that their personal needs were closely related to the needs of the institution and their participation in college-wide planning was viewed as personally rewarding while at the same time they were performing an activity that was of benefit to the institution.

Another interesting outcome of the evaluation was the ability of the participants to understand better how their role fit in with the roles of others, and how all the various roles interrelate with each other on a college-wide basis.

The ability of the constituents to look at Greenfield Community College in a different way was enhanced through the use of the CCGI. It helped them to change the way in which they perceived themselves, others, and Greenfield Community College as an institution. The CCGI helped the constituents of GCC to think of the college on a institution-wide basis. Once that perception was developed, the task of developing institutional goals and objectives became a natural outcome of the planning process.

THE ROLE OF DATA IN PLANNING

As part of the evaluation process, the participants of the Retreat/Planning Session were asked to identify what data sources were utilized for the development of the 1980-81 Institutional Goals and Objectives.

The sources identified were:

GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE REPORTS

—A Summary Report of the Community College Goals Inventory (Conducted in conjunction with the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J.)

—Studies of the Non-Returnees and Student Withdrawals from GCC.

—Follow-up Studies of the Graduates of GCC.

—The Report of the Retreat/Planning Session for Greenfield Community College: Goals and Objectives for the 1979-80 Academic Year.

—A Community Needs Assessment: Franklin County, Massachusetts.

—Progress and End of the Year Reports from the Task Forces Working on the 1979-80 Goals and Objectives.

—Various Committee Reports

—Student Personnel Reports.

OTHER DATA SOURCES

—Information obtained from other participants.

—Large group presentations that were made at the Retreat/Planning Session.

—Information known by participants that was accessed through journals, workshops, personal contacts and meetings prior to the Retreat-/Planning Session.

The participants indicated that they had adequate information sources, that data played a major role in their decisions, and that they had adequate opportunity to give their input into the process.

SIX STAGE PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1980-1981

As part of the evolutionary process in implementing management strategies at GCC, a Six Stage Plan was designed for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Institutional Goals and Objectives for GCC's 1980-81 year. The stages are as follows:

Stage One: Conducting the Retreat/Planning Session

As a result of having gone through the process of developing institutional goals and objectives the previous year, changes were made to make the Retreat-/Planning Session more effective and efficient.

Stage Two: Evaluation of the Retreat and a Third Review of the Institutional Goals and Objectives by the Participants

Two weeks after the Retreat/Planning Session the participants completed an evaluation

Stage Three: Presenting the 1980-81 Institutional Goals and Objectives to the College Community

Prior to the opening of the first day of classes, an all-college meeting was conducted, with four faculty members making the presentation of how the Institutional Goals and Objectives were developed.

Stage Four: Negotiation Process

During the first two weeks of the fall semester, each of the 23 Retreat/Planning Session participants met with a small group of their peers to negotiate the implementation process. Who will do what, when, and how? The college community had an opportunity to select what goals and objectives they wish to work with and how they felt they could contribute to the total process.

Stage Five: Implementation of the 1980-81 Institutional Goals and Objectives

Once the names of the persons responsible for the implementation of the various goals and objectives were compiled, they were brought together at the Forum for final review and agreement. The final plan was passed on to the Executive Staff and the plan of implementation began.

Stage Six: Evaluation of the 1980-81 Institutional Goals and Objectives

The task forces, committees, and people who are responsible for the implementation of the goals and objectives submit progress reports during the year and the end of the year reports at the completion of their respective activities.

CONCLUSION

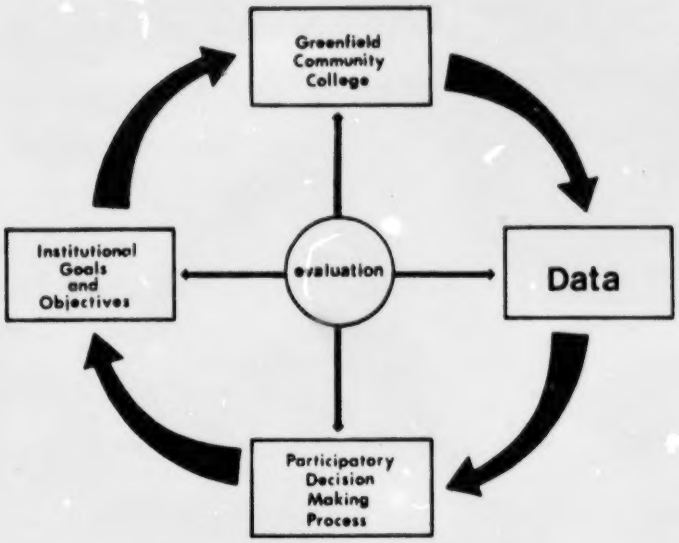
The Greenfield Plan is a process that started two years ago at GCC. It is now entering its third year of implementation and GCC looks forward to meeting the challenges of today and planning for tomorrow. In order to accomplish that, GCC will continue to look at itself on an institution-wide basis and decide on a future course of action. The participants of both the Retreat/Planning Sessions that developed the 1979-80 and the 1980-81 Institutional Goals and Objectives indicated that there was 100% support to continue the process.

That information, along with the support that has been evident from the students, faculty, staff, administration, and advisory board, is demonstrative of the positive effects that have occurred as a result of implementing The Greenfield Plan.

The information that was obtained from the administration of the Community Colleges Goals Inventory during the 1978-79 academic year, when compared to the information to be obtained through the readministration of the CCGI during the 1980-81 academic year will provide an institutional profile of where we were in the past and where we are now. The differences between the two profiles are reflective of the changes that have occurred through the implementation of The Greenfield Plan.

The CCGI is a significant tool that has enabled GCC to implement a process of institutional planning. Its use and re-use will help GCC to look objectively at itself and determine where the institution's financial and personnel resources should be allocated.

The ultimate goal of all of the activities that are inherent in The Greenfield Plan, whether it be the collection and use of data, the use of a participatory decision making process, or the development and implementation of institutional goals and objectives, is to improve the people, programs, and organization at Greenfield Community College to ensure the delivery of the best possible educational services to the community and the students.



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